Numb. CCCV.

he SPECTATOR.

Non tali auxilio, nec defenſoribus iſtis
Tempus eget ——————   Virg.

Tueſday, February 19. 1712.

OUR late News-Papers being full of the Project now on foot in the Court of *France*, for Eſtabliſhing a Political Academy, and I my ſelf having received Letters eral Vertuoſo's among my Foreign Corre- s, which give ſome Light into that Affair, o make it the Subject of this Day's Specu- A general Account of this Project may ich in the *Daily Courant* of laſt *Friday* in the Words, tranſlated from the Gazette of

February 12. 'Tis confirmed, that the reſolv'd to eſtabliſh a new Academy for of which the Marquis *de Torcy*, Miniſter ecretary of State, is to be Protector. Six nicians are to be choſen, endow'd with pro- dents, for beginning to form this Academy, hich no Perſon is to be admitted under y five Years of Age: They muſt likewiſe ch an Eſtate of Two thouſand Livres a Year, n Poſſeſſion, or to come to 'em by Inheri- The King will allow to each a Penſion of nd Livres. They are likewiſe to have a- ſters to teach 'em the neceſſary Sciences, inſtruct them in all the Treaties of Peace, e, and others which have been made in ſe- Ages paſt. Theſe Members are to meet a Week at the *Louvre*. From this Semi- e to be choſen Secretaries to Ambaſſies, y degrees may advance to higher Employ-

al *Richelieu*'s Politicks made *France* the of *Europe*. The Stateſmen who have ap- in that Nation of late Years, have on the rendered it either the Pity or Contempt of ghbours. The Cardinal erected that famous which has carried all the Parts of Polite to the greateſt height. His chief Deſign in tion was to divert the Men of Genius dling with Politicks, a Province in which care to have any one elſe interfere with On the contrary, the Marquis *de Torcy* ſeems make ſeveral young Men in *France* as himſelf, and is therefore taken up at preſent liſhing a Nurſery of Stateſmen.

ate Letters add, that there will alſo be minary of Petticoat Politicians, who are ht up at the Feet of Madam *de Mainte-* be diſpatched into Foreign Courts upon gencies of State; but as the News of this has not been yet confirmed, I ſhall take notice of it.

of my Readers may doubtleſs remember, Concluſion of the laſt War, which ried on ſo ſucceſsfully by the Enemy, nerals were many of them transformed in- dors; but the Conduct of thoſe who have d in the preſent War, has, it ſeems, little Honour and Advantage to their great Monarch, that he is reſolved to truſt his Affairs no longer in the Hands of thoſe Military Gentlemen..

The Regulations of this new Academy very much deſerve our Attention. The Students are to have in Poſſeſſion, or Reverſion, an Eſtate of Two thouſand *French* Livres *per Annum*, which, as the preſent Exchange runs, will amount to at leaſt one Hundred and twenty ſix Pounds *Engliſh*. This, with the Royal Allowance of a Thouſand Livres, will enable them to find themſelves in Coffee and Snuff; not to mention News Papers, Pen and Ink, Wax and Wafers, with the like Neceſſaries for Politicians.

A Man muſt be at leaſt Five and twenty before he can be initiated into the Myſteries of this Academy, tho' there is no queſtion but many grave Perſons of a much more advanced Age, who have been conſtant Readers of the *Paris* Gazette, will be glad to begin the World a-new, and enter themſelves upon this Liſt of Politicians.

The Society of theſe hopeful young Gentlemen is to be under the Direction of ſix Profeſſors, who, it ſeems, are to be Speculative Stateſmen, and drawn out of the Body of the Royal Academy. Theſe ſix Wiſe Maſters, according to my private Letters, are to have the following Parts allotted them.

The firſt is to inſtruct the Students in *State Legerdemain*, as how to take off the Impreſſion of a Seal, to ſplit a Wafer, to open a Letter, to fold it up again, with other the like ingenious Feats of Dexterity and Art. When the Students have accompliſhed themſelves in this part of their Profeſſion, they are to be delivered into the Hands of their ſecond Inſtructor, who is a kind of *Poſture-maſter*.

This Artiſt is to teach them how to nod judiciouſly, to ſhrug up their Shoulders in a dubious Caſe, to connive with either Eye, and in a word, the whole Practice of *Political Grimace*.

The Third is a ſort of *Language Maſter*, who is to inſtruct them in the Stile proper for a Foreign Miniſter in his ordinary Diſcourſe. And to the End that this College of Stateſmen may be thoroughly practiſed in the Political Stile, they are to make uſe of it in their common Converſations, before they are employed either in Foreign or Domeſtick Affairs. If one of them asks another, what a Clock it is, the other is to anſwer him indirectly, and, if poſſible, to turn off the Queſtion. If he is deſired to change a *Louis d'or*, he muſt beg time to conſider of it. If it be enquired of him, whether the King is at *Verſailles* or *Marly*, he muſt anſwer in a Whiſper. If he be ask'd the News of the laſt *Gazette*, or the Subject of a Proclamation, he is to reply, that he has not yet read it: Or if he does not care for explaining himſelf ſo far, he needs only draw his Brow up in Wrinkles, or elevate the Left Shoulder.

The Fourth Profeſſor is to teach the whole Art of Political Characters and Hieroglyphics; and to the End that they may be perfect alſo in this Practice,

tice, they are not to ſend a Note to one another (tho' it be but to borrow a *Tacitus* or a *Machiavil*) which is not written in Cypher.

Their Fifth Profeſſor, it is thought, will be choſen out of the Society of Jeſuits, and is to be well Read in the Controverſies of probable Doctrines, mental Reſervations, and the Rights of Princes. This Learned Man is to inſtruct them in the Grammar, Syntax, and conſtruing part of *Treaty-latin*; how to diſtinguiſh between the Spirit and the Letter, and likewiſe demonſtrate how the ſame Form of Words may lay an Obligation upon any Prince in *Europe*, different from that which it lays upon his Moſt Chriſtian Majeſty. He is likewiſe to teach them the Art of finding Flaws, Loop-holes and Evaſions, in the moſt ſolemn Compacts, and particularly a great *Rabbinical Secret*, revived of late Years by the Fraternity of Jeſuits, namely, that contradictory Interpretations of the ſame Article, may both of them be true and valid.

When our Stateſmen are ſufficiently improved by theſe ſeveral Inſtructors, they are to receive their laſt Poliſhing from one who is to act among them as *Maſter of the Ceremonies*. This Gentleman is to give them Lectures upon thoſe important Points of the *Elbow Chair*, and the *Stair-head*, to inſtruct them in the different Situations of the Right-Hand, and to furniſh them with Bows and Inclinations of all Sizes, Meaſures and Proportions. In ſhort, this Profeſſor is to give the Society their *Stiffening*, and infuſe into their Manners that Beautiful Political Starch, which may qualifie them for Levées, Conferences, Viſits, and make them ſhine in what vulgar Minds are apt to look upon as Trifles.

I have not yet heard any further Particulars, which are to be obſerved in this Society of unfledged Stateſmen; but I muſt confeſs, had I a Son of five and twenty, that ſhou'd take it into his Head at that Age to ſet up for a Politician, I think I ſhou'd go near to diſinherit him for a Block-head. Beſides, I ſhould be apprehenſive leaſt the ſame Arts which are to enable him to negotiate between Potentates might a little infect his ordinary Behaviour between Man and Man. There is no Queſtion but theſe young *Machiavils* will, in a little time, turn their College upſide-down with Plots and Stratagems, and lay as many Schemes to Circumvent one another in a Frog or a Sallad, as they may hereafter put in practice to over-reach a Neighbouring Prince or State.

We are told that the *Spartans*, tho' they puniſh'd Theft in their young-Men, when it was diſcovered, looked upon it as Honourable if it ſucceeded. Provided the Conveyance was clean and unſuſpected, a Youth might afterwards boaſt of it. This, ſay the Hiſtorians, was to keep them ſharp, and to hinder them from being impoſed upon, either in their Publick or private Negociations. Whether any ſuch Relaxations of Morality, ſuch little *jeux d'eſprit*, ought not to be allow'd in this intended Seminary of Politicians, I ſhall leave to the Wiſdom of their Founder.

In the mean time we have fair Warning given us by this doubty Body of Stateſmen; and as *Sylla* ſaw many *Marius's* in *Cæſar*, ſo I think we may diſcover many *Torci's* in this College of *Academicians*. Whatever we think of our ſelves, I am afraid neither our *Smyrna* or *St. James's* will be a Match for it. Our Coffee-houſes are, indeed, very good Inſtitutions, but whether or no theſe our *Britiſh* Schools of Politics may furniſh out voys and Secretaries as an Academy that for that purpoſe, will deſerve our ſerious ration; eſpecially if we remember that o try is more famous for producing Men grity than Stateſmen; and that, on the contrary Truth and *Britiſh* Policy make a Conſpicuous gure in NOTHING, as the Earl of *Roch* very well obſerved in his admirable Poem Barren Subject.

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